Tiffany Green Dr. O 2/9/10 ED. 702.22

I once remember hearing that ‘the best students make the best teachers’ and ‘a teacher is one who never stops learning’. As I have gotten further along in my education and professional career as a pedagogue, I have realized that there is some truth to these statements. Currently as a matriculated Brooklyn College student I have had the opportunity to put these statements to the test. The ideals of the Conceptual Framework of Brooklyn College are tightly woven into the course objectives of a vast majority of specific majors and areas of concentration within the academic arena. Currently, this ‘Theory and Research’ course is clearly reflective of the school’s educational principles of **diversity, collaboration, social justice, self-evaluation and technology.**

In reading the conceptual framework ideals, I was vividly reminded of my younger years as a student being educated in the **diverse** public school system here in New York. My classes were full of students from all different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Often times we were divided into groups to work together on projects and simple classroom assignments. Our exposure to one another made collaboration and teamwork easier to perform as an adult. It also helped to teach us basic social skills and cues that we acquired through learned behavior that we otherwise may not have gotten in an isolated setting. **Collaboration** is imperative in order to help share and foster ideas of learning and social engagement. Exchanging ideas and being academically accountable are helpful ways to stimulate growth as a learner. Yet, as a student this did not seem so obvious. Thankfully, collaboration as a youngster made is easier to work well with my colleagues as an adult both in and out of school. Very rarely are teachers encouraged to observe their colleagues actively teaching in the classroom and offer an informal assessment. So often we conduct the workday behind the four walls with our classroom door shut until 3 o’clock. Being in this class has provided me with the opportunity to hear the ideas and implementations that other teachers have and want to share with others and take them back to my school colleagues. In addition, it teaches us the importance of grouping diverse students as collaborative teams in the classroom. Teacher and student collaboration is one of the major keys to a successful academic school year.

Once we as educators understand why these principles of the Conceptual Framework were designed we can then create goals to implement them into our schools and classrooms. This will ultimately create a sense of unity and camaraderie amongst the students and teachers who are responsible for being accountable to fulfill these goals and establish a visionary school mission. Understanding and recognizing the social injustices that many students face in this diverse city will help teachers to be more aware of the needs and services that these children have. In New York City many students come from low socio-economic families that cannot afford a computer at home or even basic school supplies. **Technology** may only be available at school and is used to reinforce knowledge and understanding of several lessons. Knowing this would allow teachers to develop sensitivity and understanding for the population that we teach. Therefore, as pedagogues we must always be prepared to step in and be an advocate for our students. We must make a commitment to providing the foundation for their education while following the state standards of learning. **Self-Reflection** is critical in teaching and being compassionate. In doing so, we force ourselves to stretch and grow as educators and not get complacent in our teaching styles and methods. We must always remember to tailor our lesson plans to the academic ability of each individual student with the resources available. Differentiation of instruction is a must in order for students to get the best results out of their learning experience. It also teaches them to self-reflect and be accountable for their work. We are modeling and passing down these principles to our students that are key components in life. We are not just educators but we are nurturers and counselors who are adamantly committed to the principles of the Conceptual Framework and the overall growth and academic development of our students.

I believe that great teachers are ones who never give up, use all of their resources and never believe that they can’t learn from their students. Understanding the social injustice that many students are faced with will only motivate us to strive harder to be professional, set and accomplish goals and always make room for improvement and feedback. For our students are truly our greatest critics.